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ABSTRACT

Literary Yiddish shows a high frequency of declarative sentences with the subject present and the verb in sentence-initial position, the so-called consecutive order. This construction was analyzed in one collection of 17 short narratives and with reference to a hypothesis of German grammarians regarding a similar structure in German. In this corpus, 16% of the narrative clauses were found to be in consecutive order, most of these involved verbs of saying and verbs of motion. However, when cases of the same verb used in both consecutive order and in the regular verb-second construction are found, the consecutive sentences tend to have cohesive ties to the preceding context, usually immediately preceding. Anaphoric reference appears to be the prototype situation for consecutive sentences. It also appears that the regular construction, with the verb in second position, is typically used to introduce new material. Only two exceptions were found. A brief bibliography is included. (MSE)

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COHESION AND THE YIDDISH CONSECUTIVE ORDER

Kenneth L. Miner

Abstract: Literary Yiddish shows a high frequency of declarative sentences with subject present and the verb in sentence-initial position--the so-called consecutive order. This study is an initial attempt to correlate this construction with cohesive factors; I am essentially testing a hypothesis put forward by Hennig Brinkmann and Klaus Fleischmann regarding the same construction in German, where it is very marginal if part of the Schriftsprache at all.

1 Introduction

Despite a few OV characteristics (den Besten & Moed-van Walraven 1986), Yiddish is most efficiently described as an SVO language, one which has even extended the familiar verb-second rule to clauses with overt complementizers.

There is however a very frequent construction in which the verb is in sentence-initial position, even though the mode is straightforwardly declarative and the subject is present. The result may be treated as a clause or as an independent sentence:

(1) Ikh hob nit gehat keyn gelt, hob ikh ongehoybn arbetn. (Weinreich 1974:122)
'I had no money, so I began to work.'

Hob ikh gevart oyf im. (Weinreich, ibid.)
'So I waited for him.'

Farshteyt nisht zayn shver di mayse.
'His father-in-law did not understand the matter.'
(Birnbaum 1979:304)

This construction, especially common in narrative, has come to be termed, in American textbooks at least, the consecutive order. Note that the construction is frequently (as in the first two examples in (1)) translated as a result clause, but not always (cf. the third example in (1)).

Birnbaum (1979:§209(d),(e)) implies that he sees the construction as the result of elipsis of certain conjunctions, such as deriber, derfar, makhmes dem, all with meanings like 'so' or 'therefore' and all of which, when present, require the verb to

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follow. He states, "The conjunction may be omitted, but the... word order will still have conclusive force." However he concedes: "The same construction appears even when there is clearly no causative connection." Whence the present study: what in fact does determine the use of the consecutive order?

The view that the meaning is basically resultative seems to be a consensus among grammarians of Yiddish. Schaechter (1986: 193-4) refers to it as the rezultat-seyder or 'resultative order' though he also uses Weinreich's term.[2] It is regularly translated by English 'so' or 'therefore' clauses in textbooks. However, as Birnbaum (loc. cit.) notes, it occurs in many cases in which the meaning is not resultative, or in which we would have to extend the notion of result rather far beyond the meanings of the English and Yiddish conjunctions we have mentioned. Often the events related by the consecutive order show, at first glance, little more connection than sequence in time. From the texts I have examined for this study (to be described below) we may note the following examples:

(2) Hobn zey gezen vi zayn vayb shtet un bakt broyt in oyvn un nebn ir zitst Eleazar un est, yedn broytl vos zi hot fun oyvn aroysgenumen hot er oyfn ort oyfgegesn, biz es iz shoyn nisht geblibn mer keyn teyg in di knet-payle, un der oyvn iz geven leydik.
Hot zikh eyner fun di eyzl-traybers ongerufn un gezogt...

'They saw how his wife stood baking bread in the oven and how Eleazar was sitting beside her, and each loaf that she took out of the oven he ate on the spot, until there was no more dough in the dough-tray, and the oven was empty.
(So) one of the mule-drivers said...' (1b)

Here, although we can translate with English 'so' (which is after all by no means limited to strictly resultative clauses), what has gone before does not really bring about the remark of the mule-driver. The following is rather similar:

(3) ...un kile vaser-kvaln hobn geflosn dort in tol.
Hobn zay zikh ale dort gekert...

'...and cool water fountains were flowing there in the valley.
(So) they all turned aside there...' (1d)

Compare now the following examples:

(4) Azoy vi zey hobn zikh nor avekgezetst hobn zey derzen vi a groyser shlang kumt un geyt zey farbay.
Hot R. Eleazar a zog geton tsum shlang...

'No sooner had they seated themselves than they saw a huge snake coming past them.
Rabbi Eleazar said to the snake...' (1d)

Rabbi Eleazar was not caused to address the snake, and, without more background than this, we would be unlikely to use English 'so' in this case.

(5) Hot R. Eleazar a zog geton tsum shlang: 'Shlang, shlang! Ker tsurik, vayl der mentsh vos du geyst im hargnen hot shoyn tshuve geton, er hot kharote gehat oyfn zind vos er hot geton un er hot genumen oyf zikh mer aza shlekhts nisht tsu ton!'
Hobn zikh di khaveyrim gevundert dos tsu hern...

'Rabbi Eleazar said to the snake, 'Snake, snake! Turn back, for the man you are going to kill has repented, he has atoned for the sin that he committed and he has undertaken to do such an evil thing no more!
The disciples were amazed to hear this...' (1d)

Here a causative conjunction seems even less likely than in (4).

(6) ...hot R. Eleazar vider gezogt tsu im: 'Shlang, shlang! Nokhdem vos m'hot dir gezogt fun himl un m'hot dir gegebn reshus tsu gen hargnen yenem mentshn, hot yener kharote gehat oyf zayn zind un er hot genumen oyf zikh es mer nisht tsu ton, ker zikh alzo tsurik fun dayn veg!
Iz der shlang geblibn shten...

!...Rabbi Eleazar spoke again to him: 'Snake, snake! After you were spoken to from heaven and given permission to kill that man, he atoned for his sin and undertook to do it no more; turn back therefore from your path!
The snake merely stood there...' (1d)

Here the meaning seems to be adversative.[3]

Below I will reproduce one of the shorter texts in its entirety in order to show how the consecutive order functions throughout. I turn now to the German grammarians.

2 The Brinkmann-Fleischmann hypothesis

Although verb-initial declarative sentences with subject present are not unknown in formal written German, they are marginal. However,

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the construction has engendered considerable discussion, much of it historical in nature. Two recent writers have nonetheless offered a structural hypothesis which promises to shed some light on Yiddish.

Mauer (1926:§§67-76), summarizing his earlier and later work, concludes that the construction was common in OHG with all types of verb, began to disappear in late OHG times and died out completely in early MHG. From the middle of the 15th century it appears again, especially in writings based on Latin models and beginning with verbs of saying, whence it spread to other verbs by analogy.

> Der lateinische Einfluss spielt eine Hauptrolle. Aber er erklärt nicht, warum die Erscheinung auf Verba des Sagens beschränkt ist. Der zweite Grund ist der, dass diese Verba schon in einer scheinbaren Anfangsstellung im Gebrauch sind, nämlich im Einschubsatz. In Fällen wie "Das ist sehr schön," sagte der Mann versteinert sagte der Mann zur Formel und wird als gantzes auch vor die direkte Rede gestellt. Dieser psychologische Vorgang könnte sich auch selbständig jederzeit vollziehen. Im 15. Jahrhundert hat das lateinische Vorbild jedoch ganz besonderen Anstoss dazu gegeben. Über die Ausbreitung des neuen Typus, die sich nach den Gesetzen der Analogiebildungen vollzieht, erübrigt sich jede weitere Ausführung.[4] (1926:199-200)

In the Schriftsprache of his own time, Mauer says, the construction survives in comic strips and other sorts of humor, in the usage of certain novelists to create an archaic flavor, and in serialized novellas appearing in newspapers, where he refers to it as an affectation (Maniriertheit). A brief excerpt will suffice:

> Geisterte ein Schatten auf dem Schmalpfad des Wehrs und beugte sich tief. Knarrte der Schleusenmund und schloss sich gähnend. Und die Wasser der Stillach freuten sich der Ruh. Strömten zu und gluckerten leise am Stein. Quirlten und murmelten. Wuchsen und dehnten sich wohlig und behäbig.[5]

Biener (1926:248-255) disagrees with Mauer regarding the verba dicendi as the source of the verb-initial declaratives; he offers several pages of new examples with other verbs from the 15th century on.

Fleischmann (1973:210-221), in a comprehensive synchronic study of all cases of sentence-initial verb in German, includes our topic under two headings: (a) folk-song flavor (Volksliedton) and (b) slang (dialectal?) in narratives (Umgangssprachlich (mundartlich?) in Erzählungen). Here is his characterization:

> Vor allem Erzählungen erhalten durch sie [the clause-initial position-KM] etwas Drängendes; die einzelnen Sachverhalte werden ziemlich unverbunden nebeneinander gesetzt, es fehlt die Distanz, um sie zueinander in eine andere Beziehung als die natürliche, durch die Geschehensfolge gegebene temporale Beziehung oder die im Sprecher ablaufende assoziative Abfolgebeziehung zu stellen.[6] (1973:220)

And:

> Die Abhängigkeit von der Situation verhindert, dass der Sprecher zu dem betreffendem Sachverhalt Stellung nimmt, d.h. ihm einen Platz in einem Relief zuweist.[6] (1973:221, Fn 22)

Fleischmann quotes Brinkmann (1962:477) to the same effect:

> Die situationsbestimmte Erststellung der Personalform zeugt fur das dialogische Wesen der Sprache, während die Zweitstellung dazu dienen kann, Mitteilungen zu geben, die unabhängig von der Situation sind.[6]

In a word, the claim is that the German equivalent of the construction we are examining signals a dependence on the situation: the speaker chooses, as it were, not to "take a position" on the relationship between the event coded in the verb-initial construction and the preceeding events, in the sense of providing a particular conjunction; with the verb-initial construction the speaker indicates instead the dependence of that relationship on the situation. If we take the term "situation" to mean discourse context, this claim ought to be interpretable in terms of cohesion as investigated, for example, by Halliday & Hasan 1976.

I have, therefore, explored the possibility that a high degree of cohesion links the consecutive-order clauses to their context. That the consecutive order itself is a cohesive device goes without saying; the first clause in a narrative is never in the consecutive order, and in order to interpret such sentences we must somehow refer to preceding discourse--hence the common "resultative" concept.

3 The Texts

I have examined the consecutive order in a collection of seventeen short narratives published under the title Bedarkhey Avoyseynu (In the Ways of Our Fathers), Vol. III, by Menakhem Gets (Jerusalem, 1979). These are legends of the Tannaim and Amoraim for young people. My coding system for the stories is given in the Appendix.

In order to show the operation of the consecutive order in a complete story, I give 1d, "The Mule Drivers," in its entirety.*

The Mule Drivers

1	R. Eliazar, der zun fun R. Shimon ben Yokhai, hot in zayne yunge yorn nisht gevolt lernen toyre.	Rabbi Eliazar, the son of R. Shimon ben Yokhai, did not want to study Torah in his youth.
2	Er hot beser gevolt zikh fardingen tsu trogn masoes, far mentshn oyf zayne akslen, vi tsu unterboygn zayne akslen far dem yokh fun toyre.	He prefered hiring himself out to people as a burden-bearer, carrying burdens on his shoulders, to bending his shoulders to the Torah.
3	Er iz geven shtark un kreftik un er hot zer fil gegesn.	He was strong and powerful and he ate a great deal.
4	Amol zenen gekumen in zayn shtot eyzl-traybers velkhe hobn gevolt aribertrn mel fun dort in di nonte dorfer,	One time there came into his town mule-drivers who wished to port meal from there to nearby towns,
→ 5	zenen zey farbaygegangen di shtub fun R. Shimon'en.	they came by the house of Rabbi Shimon.
→ 6	Hobn zey gezen vi zayn vayb shtet un bakt broyt in oyvn un nebn ir zitst Eliazar un est,	They saw how his wife was standing baking bread in the oven with Eliazar standing there eating,
7	yedn broytl vos zi hot fun oyvn oroysgenumen hot er oyfn ort gegesn,	each loaf that she took out of the oven he ate on the spot,
8	biz es iz shoyn nisht geblibn mer kayn teyg in der knet-payle, un der oyvn is geven leydik.	until there was no more dough left in the dough-tray, and the oven was empty.
→ 9	Hot zikh eyner fun di eyzl-traybers ongerufn un gezogt:	One of the mule-drivers said:
10	"Es iz nisht andersh nor az a shlekhter shlang ligt in der gederim fun dozign yung"	"It can only be that an evil serpent is lying in the belly of that boy"
11	"S'zet oys az ot der iz nisht geborn gevorn nor kedey tsu brengen a hunger oyf der velt"-- hot a tsveyter zikh ongerufn.	"It looks as if this one was born only to bring a hunger into the world," another one said.

*the "ties" may for the moment be ignored.

12	Dos hobn zey geredt tsvishn zikh, ober Eliazar hot zeyere reyd gut gehert un er hot shoyn gevust vos tsu tun zey.	This they were saying to each other, but Eleazar heard their talk very well and he already knew what to do to them.
13	Ven zey hobn ibergelozt dort zeyere eyzlen un zenen gegangen brengen zeyer shkoyre aroyftsulodn oyf di eyzlen,	When they had left their mules mules there and had gone to bring their produce to load onto the mules,
14	hot Eliazar genumen di eyzlen oyf zayne akslen un er hot zey aroyfgefirt eynem eynem oyfn dakh-boydem.	Eliazar took their mules on his shoulders and carried them one by one to the roof.
15	Ven di eyzl-traybers zenen tsurikgekumen mit zeyer shkoyre un hobn nisht gefunen zeyere eyzlen,	When the mule-drivers returned with their produce and didn't find their mules,
16	hobn zey gemakht a geshrey az m'hot zey tsugeganvet zeyere eyzlen.	they shouted that their mules had been stolen.
17	Ober do hot eyner oyfgehoybn zayne oygn in der hoykh	But then one raised up his eyes;
→ 18	hot er derzen di eyzlen in dakh-boydem	he saw the mules on the roof;
→ 19	hobn zey farshtanen az dos iz di di mayse fun Eliazar,	they understood that this was the doing of Eliazar,
20	vorum ver a anderer hot es aza kraft tsu nemen a eyzl oyf di akslen un aroyftrogn oyfn boydem?	since who else had the strength to take a mule on his shoulders and carry it to the roof?
→ 21	Zenen zey arayn tsu R. Shomin'en in shtub un hobn im dertseylt vos zayn zun hot zey getun.	They went into Rabbi Shimon's house and told him what his son had done to them.
22	"Un farvos hot er es aykh getun?" hot zey R. Shimon gefregt--"tsu hot ir nisht im mit epes baleydigt?"	"And why did he do it to you?" Rabbi Shimon asked them--"didn't you somehow insult him?"
23	"Neyn"--hobn zey geentfert--"mir hobn bloyz tsvishn zikh geredt vunderndik zikh oyf zayn groyzn koyekh in esn,	"No"--they answered--"we were just talking among ourselves, amazed at his great prowess in eating,

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24	eyner hot gezogt az a shlekhter shlang ligt in zayne gederim... un a tsveyter hot gezogt az er iz gekumen brengen a hunger oyf der velt...ober mir hobn nisht gemeynt az undzere reyd zoln onkumen tsu zayne oyern."	one said an evil serpent lay in his belly...and another said he came to bring a hunger into the world...but we didn't intend our talk to reach his ears"
25	"Un farvos hot ir azelkhes oykh bloyz tsvishn zikh geredt?"--hot zey R. Shimon vayter gefregt--"tsu den est er fun ayers?	"And why were you talking among yourselves that way in the first place?"--Rabbi Shimon asked them further--"does he eat anything of yours?
26	Der Bashefer vos hot im bashafn hot oykh bashafn zayn esn vos er badarf, yetst geyt un bet bay im mekhile un zogt im in mayn nomen az er zol aykh aroysbrengen di eyzlen."	The Creator who made him also made the food that he needs; now go and ask his pardon and tell him in my name to bring down the mules."
→ 27	Hobn zey azoy geton un Eliazar hot zey aropgetrogn zeyere eyzlen.	They did so and Eliazar brought down their mules.
28	Ober anshtot vos frier hot er zey aroyfgefirt eynem eynem hot er zey yetst tsvey tsvey in amol aropgefirt, un ale zenen geshtanen un hobn zikh nisht gekent opvundern, zey hobn nokh aza gvure bay a mentshn nisht gezen.	But instead of one by one as he did before he brought them down two at a time, and everyone stood and could not stop wondering at him; they had never seen such strength in a human being before.

4 Results

There are 920 narrative clauses (that is, excluding reported speech) in the seventeen stories, of which 149, or 16%, are in the consecutive order. Of these, no fewer than 84, or 56%, have verbs of saying as main verb. The counts for the verba dicendi are: 'said', 37; 'answered', 17; 'asked', 11; of the following fewer than ten instances: 'summoned', 'related', 'laughed', 'prayed', 'notified', 'ordered', 'read verse', 'cried', 'called', 'admitted'.

Clearly, in modern literary Yiddish, as in MHG, the consecutive order predominantly affects verbs of saying. Next most prevalent are verbs of motion: 39 out of the 149, or 26%. Most frequent of these is 'went (to)', ten instances; others are 'went by', 'placed (person in seat)', 'went in', 'turned (to him)', 'remained', 'got up (from sitting position)', 'went with', 'released (hold on s.o.)', 'placed self', 'went by vehicle', 'rose up (wave of sea)', 'became still (sea)', 'fall in', 'untwined self', ran out', 'appeared (to s.o.)', 'arrived', 'jumped over', 'caught', 'didn't want to let go', 'separated self from'.

There were 16 consecutive orders with verbs of mental activity, most frequently 'saw' with six instances; others were 'understood', 'were aggrieved', 'heard', 'decided', 'was heard', 'became angry'.

The remaining ten verbs are almost all actions: 'gave birth', 'was punished', 'met', gave', 'took', 'killed'. Only three statives were found: 'it was the day of', 'was greater than', 'it was so'.

Except for the prevalence of the verbs of saying, probably not much can be attributed to the frequency of verb types or the general frequency of actions over statives; these sorts of verbs are the most frequent in the stories in general. However, there are enough cases of contrast--cases in which we find the same verb in consecutive order and in regular second position--to give us some idea of the cohesion factors. The basic idea in Halliday and Hasan's (1976) concept of cohesion is the tie: a sentence is linked to preceding discourse material, immediate or remote, by an anaphor, a repetition, a lexically subordinate or otherwise related item, etc. In this study we will need only anaphoric ties and repetitions. An anaphoric tie is shown in the example below, from the story given on pp. 86-88 .

(7) Amol zenen gekumen in zayn shtot eyzl-traybers...
zenen zey farbaygegengen di shtub fun R. Shimon'en.

From (6) above, an example of a repetition:

(8) ...hot R. Eleazar vider gezogt tsu im: 'Shlang, shlang!...
iz der shlang geblibn shten...

The cases of contrast I have been able to extract from the stories are as follows (ties indicated; note them with consecutive order):

(9) With verb 'see'.

Verb in second position:
Hot R. Shimon dan gezogt gevise verter, un bald hot arumgenumen di shtub a fayer fun himl.
Un di khaveyrim hobn gezen vi a roykh geyt aroys fun shtub dem gantsn tog.

Rabbi Shimon spoke certain words, and at once a fire from heaven encircled the house.
And the disciples saw a smoke going up from the house the entire day.

Consecutive order:
Amol zenen gekumen in zayn shtot eyzl-traybers...
Hobn zay gezen vi zayn vayb shtet...

Once mule drivers came into his town...
They saw his wife standing...

Notice that when the verb 'see' is in second position, the subject is di khaveyrim, which is not linked to the preceding, while in the case of the consecutive order the subject is the pronoun zey which is tied to eyzl-traybers in the preceding context. Compare still another case with regular order:

(10) Hobn zey im geentfert: 'Gib nor a kuk, ot der roykh kumt aroyf fun a fayer fun oybn, vayl haynt kroynt men R. Eleazar'n mit a heylign kroyn.
Dan hobn di khaveyrim gezen vi fir fliglen fun a adler lozn zikh arop in dem fayer...

They answered him: "Look, this smoke is rising from a fire from above, for today Rabbi Eleazar is crowned with a holy crown.
Then the disciples saw how four eagle's wings were descending into the fire...

In all the examples that follow, the regular order will be contrasted with the consecutive order, in that sequence.

(11) With verb 'go'.

Verb in second position:
Hot R. Eleazar oysgerufn: "Voyl iz undzer kheylek..."
Dan zenen di khevraye tsugegangen tsu R. Yosey'n un hobn im gezogt...

Rabbi Eleazar cried, "Well is our portion..."
Then the disciples went to Rabbi Yosey and said to him...

Consecutive order:
R. Yosey iz a mol ayngefaln in a shtarke krenk.
Iz R. Eleazar zayn eydem im gegangen bazukhn un mevaker-koyle zayn.

Rabbi Yosey once fell very ill.
Rabbi Eleazar his son-in-law went to visit him and comfort him.

(12) With verb 'turn'.

Verb in second position:
Vi der shlang hot dos gehert hot er zikh bald oysgedret oyf tsurik un er hot genumen shnel loyfn, biz er iz tsurikgekumen tsu der meara.
Dan hot R. Eleazar zikh gekert tsu di khaveyrim...

When the snake heard this he turned back at once and began running rapidly, until he was back at the cave.
Then Rabbi Eleazar turned to the disciples...

Consecutive order:
Ober ot hobn zey oyfgehoybn zeyere oygn un hobn derzen far zikh a shenem feld vos iz badekt gevorn mit tepikher fun frishe grozn, ayngeflanst mit gute beymer...un kile vaser-kvaln hobn geflosn dort in tol.
Hobn zey zikh ale dort gekert un hobn zikh anider gezetst...

But now they lifted up their eyes and saw before them a beautiful field which was covered with carpets of fresh grasses, planted with good trees... and cool water-fountains flowed there in the valley.
They all turned aside there and sat down...

Compare:

(13) "Lomir geyn un ton khesed mit a milgroym vos iz ful geven mit aldings, Zayn nomen iz R. Yosey..."
Di khevrayim hot zikh bald opgekert fun zeyn veg...

"Let us go and perform charity with a pomegranate who is filled with everything (i.e., a learned man). His name is Rabbi Yosey..."
The disciples at once turned aside from their way...

(14) With verb 'release'.

Verb in second position:
Hot R. Eleazar mispalel geven, un der yid iz farheylt gevorn fun zayne vundn.
Ober der shlang hot nokh alts nisht opgelozt dem toytn kerper.

Rabbi Eleazar prayed, and the Jew was healed of his wounds.
But the snake still did not release the dead body.

Consecutive order:
"Shlang, shlang! Ales vos du host geton hostu voyl geton...Geh un bahalt zikh in dayn meara, un ikh bin goyzer oyf dir az mer zolstu keyn shodn nisht ton keyn bashefenishn!"
Hot der shlang bald opgelozn dem kerper...

"Snake, snake! Everything you have done you have done well...Go and hide in your cave, and I decree hereby that you shall no more do any harm to any creature!"
The snake at once released the body...

(15) With verb 'say'.

Verb in second position:
Hot der shlang bald opgelozn dem kerper fun dem goy, hot aropgeboygn zayn kop un er iz farshvundn gevorn in zayn lokh.
Dan hot R. Eleazar gezogt tsu dem yidn...

The snake at once released the body of the gentile, lowered his head and disappeared into his hole.

Consecutive order:
Hot er gezetst zayn zun R. Eleazar lebn im, un hot im gezogt: "Zits, mayn zun, zits. Vayl fun hayntign tog verstu geheyligt un du vest vern gerekhnt tsvishn di heylige layt."
Hot R. Shimon dan gezogt gevise verter...

He seated his son Rabbi Eleazar beside him, and said to him: "Sit, my son, sit. Fro from this day you become holy and you will be counted among the holy ones."
Rabbi Shimon then said certain words...

In sum: the consecutive order tends strongly to be used in the case of certain classes of action verbs, notably verbs of saying and verbs of motion; when however we find cases of the same verb used in both the consecutive order and in the regular verb-second construction, the consecutive sentences tend to have cohesive ties to the preceding context, usually to the immediately preceding context. Indeed, anaphoric reference to the preceding sentence would seem to be the prototype situation for consecutive sentences.[7]

It appears that the regular construction with verb in second position, in contrast to the consecutive order, is typically used to introduce new material. Let us look again at "The Mule Drivers" on pp. 86-88 . Sentences 1-3 may be seen as an introductory outline of the character of Rabbi Eleazar. With sentence 4 the mule drivers enter the story, and this sentence is tied to 5-8, which sets up the scene at the oven. Sentence 9 is in the consecutive order presumably because (a) the verb is a verb of saying and (b) the mule drivers, already brought into the story, are still the topic and sentence 9 is therefore tied to sentence 6. Exactly the same pattern is found in 17-21: in 17, one of the mule drivers happens to look up, which leads to discovery of Eleazar's prank. In 21, though--where the main verb is a motion verb--there is a tie back to the mule drivers again: they are still the topic, in spite of the explanatory digression of 20.

I have found only two exceptions to the above generalizations. One is this:

(16) Consecutive order:
Er hot dan geleyent oyf zikh dem posek: di toyre iz vi a shif fun sokhrim vos brengt fun vaytn ir broyt (gemeynt dermit di mayse fun di sokhrim mitn shif vos zenen in shkus fun zayn toyre nitsl gevorn un hobn im gebrengt hilf).
Dertseyln di khakhomim: di ale yorn fun zayne yesurim iz keyner nisht geshtorbn far zayn tsayt.

He then applied to the situation the following verse: the Torah is like a ship of merchants who bring their bread from afar (meaning thereby the matter of the merchants with the ship who were saved by the virtue of his Torah and brought him help).
The sages relate that in all the years of his suffering no one died before his time.

Here there is indeed a verb of saying and there is a tie; but since "the sages" are abruptly introduced we would have expected a regular sentence. It may be noted, however, that "the sages" are an overriding topic of these stories.

The other exception constitutes the only example in my data of a consecutive sentence with me(n) 'one' (indefinite pronoun) as subject:

(17) Consecutive order:
Zayn muter hot dershmekt a reyekh fun a gutn esn un s'hot ir genumen zeyr khaleshn dos harts.
Iz men gekumen tsu Rabbi'n fregn vos m'zol ton...

His mother smelled the aroma of something good to eat and she began to long for it.
(So) they came to the Rabbi to ask what to do...

The Rabbi mentioned is wholly new to the story at this point. Here we definitely would expect a verb-second sentence. However, perhaps the indefinite pronoun as subject makes this a special case.

NOTES

1 I gratefully acknowledge the remarks of Bill Keel on this topic. Spelling in the Romanized Yiddish examples is normalized to the YIVO system.

2 Unfortunately I have been unable to see Zaretski 1929, the most often-cited grammatical work on Yiddish.

3 According to Schaechter (1986:61) the consecutive order may indeed have adversative meaning, in which case it is accompanied by special intonation.

4 (transl.) The Latin influence is a major factor, but by itself it does not explain why the phenomenon was limited to the verbs of saying. A second factor was that these verbs were already in what amounts to initial position in quotations. In such cases as "Das ist sehr schön," sagte der Mann the phrase sagte der Mann is frozen into a formula and then used in direct speech as well. This psychological process could have taken place independently at any time; in the 15th century the Latin models gave it a special impetus. The diffusion of the new type follows from the laws of analogical formation and requires no further explanation.

5 Mauer, p. 210. Taken from the Darmstädter Täglicher Anzeiger. Almost every sentence begins with the verb.

6 Most of all it gives a narrative a certain urgency. The individual events are rather loosely chained together; there is insufficient distance between them to allow them to be put in any relationship other than the natural one provided by the course of the events themselves or by the course of their associations in the mind of the speaker...Dependence upon the situation prevents the speaker from taking a position with regard to a given event or assigning it to a place in a relief.
The situation-determined initial position of the verb attests to the dialogic nature of speech, while the second position may serve to provide material that is independent of the situation.

7 Oddly enough, Prince (to appear), which contains the only previous speculation on the discourse function of the consecutive order known to me (her §6.2), is led to suggest precisely the opposite hypothesis: that the consecutive order, like the ES + Subj Preposing sentences which are her main topic, mark their subject as "not representing entities which have already been evoked in the discourse." Apparently Prince has overlooked the fact that subjects in consecutive sentences, unlike those in her ES sentences, not only may be but frequently are pronominal. Finally, neither Prince nor anyone else I have consulted has remarked on the frequency of the consecutive order with verbs of saying.

APPENDIX

Titles (some ad hoc)	Code	Pages in Gets
The bar-mitsve	1a	7-12
The mule drivers	1b	12-19
Taught by Elijah	1c	19-25
The trust is returned	1d	25-43
The resurrection	1e	44-54
R. Eleazar accepts suffering	1f	55-63
R. Eleazar's wife departs	1g	64-70
The cave departure of the Tsadik	1h	70-77
A pearl from heaven	2a	79-85
The Tsadik's decree fulfilled	2b	86-95
A question of a foot	2c	95-96
A conversation with the Messiah	3a	99-103
A walk with Elijah	3b	103-115
Alive in paradise	3c	115-120
A Tsadik before birth	4a	123-125
This world vs. the world to come	4b	125-128
Torah the best merchandise	4c	128-131

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